

Lake Michigan Fisheries Team

**February 17, 2004
Wells Fargo Conference Room
Lakeshore Technical College
Cleveland, WI**

Notes

Next meeting: April 1, 2004, Wells Fargo Conference Room, Lakeshore Technical College, Cleveland, WI

Present: Mike Toney, Steve Hogler, Matt Coffaro, Brad Eggold, Steve Fajfer, Mark Opgenorth, Randy Link, Justine Hasz, Pradeep Hirethota, Tom Hansen, Bill Horns, Paul Peeters, Lee Meyers

Brief updates

Time was allowed for short updates and reminders of topics of interest. The following were mentioned.

- Scientific Collectors Permits for USFWS
- Likely legislative hearings on the Green Bay yellow perch rule
- February 21 meeting of WF/GLSFC
- Cormorant study
- The next LMFT meeting will be used for Program Reviews.
- Annual reports for LMC
 - Authors are asked to have reports to Bill Horns by March 15.
- Sturgeon letter to LMC
- Lake Sturgeon Task Group sub-committees
- Green Bay smelt harvest limits – NRB Order FH-12-03
- Expected adoption of trap net marking rule – NRB Order FH-35-03
- Monitoring steelhead out-migration
- Culling issues, coho and brown trout
- Staffing changes
- Lake Michigan Committee meetings (conference call February 26, annual meeting March 24-25)
- Meeting of Wisconsin Statistical Catch-at-age Modeling Group (WSCAAMG)
- Commercial fishing re-write
- Milwaukee River walleye

Mass marking

Background (from agenda). With the endorsement of the Council of Lake Committees, a committee headed by Mark Ebener is looking into the feasibility of using new automated fish-marking machine available from Northwest Marine Technologies to someday mark all salmonines stocked in the Great Lakes. The machine can process 25,000 fish per 8-hr day, removing the adipose fin and/or implanting a coded-wire tag. Paul Peeters, Brad Eggold, Steve Fajfer, and I have been involved in early discussions. A demonstration project elsewhere in the Great Lakes is being planned. Paul has worked up some preliminary cost estimates for using the system to mark salmon in Lake Michigan.

Action. This was a discussion item.

Thermal standards for point source discharges into the Great Lakes

Background (from agenda). Larry Claggett is working on a statewide committee to revise rules pertaining to point thermal discharge standards. Because the new rule could increase or decrease the amount of heat discharged into Lake Michigan, Steve Hewett suggested that the LMFT discuss the issue. Larry and Mike Wenholtz (Bureau of Watershed Management) will attend the meeting to provide information and lead a discussion.

Action. This was a discussion item.

Lake Michigan smelt harvest limit and incidental catch

Background (from agenda). The WF/GLSFC and others continue to urge the Department to sharply reduce the commercial harvest limits for smelt from Lake Michigan (now 1,000,000, less whatever is taken from Green Bay). The expressed concerns pertain to incidental catch of chubs and alewives, as well as the harvest of smelt. Steve Hogler put together a short power point presentation on this issue for the LMFF.

Action. This was a discussion item.

Genomics tools

Background. Drs Matthew Rise and Rebecca Klaper of the UW-Milwaukee WATER Institute briefed the group on the potential uses of genomics tools in fisheries work.

Action. This was a discussion item.

2003 creel survey results and the red flags

Background (from agenda). Our 2003 creel suggest show poor harvests for all species except chinook. There is some speculation that the production of wild chinook smolts may be far larger than had been suspected. Brad Eggold has raised concerns about a predator/prey imbalance. Right now, the LMC is planning on a lake-wide discussion of salmon stocking levels in April of 2005. Meanwhile some indicators of fish health or nutrition problems have been raised by the “red flags” group of the Lake Michigan Technical Committee. A discussion of all this would be timely.

Action. This was a discussion item.

Strawberry Creek water supply.

Background. Paul Peeters and Mark Opgenorth described the need for improving the system of providing supplemental water to the Strawberry Creek weir.

Action. Paul will draft an issue brief summarizing the problem and discussing options.